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SUBJECT: INDONESIA ESTH HIGHLIGHTS: NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2008

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ENVIRONMENT:

Marine Conservation in West Papua

[1](#)1. On November 24, Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries Freddy Numberi inaugurated a new marine conservation area (MCA) in Kaimana, West Papua Province. Members of the local community, who contributed their indigenous land rights to the new 600,000-hectare MCA, are working collaboratively with the local government and Conservation International Indonesia to establish regulations and management plans.

Land Conflict Delays Certification

[1](#)2. During the sixth Roundtable Meeting on Sustainable Palm Oil on November 19, the NGO Palm Oil Watch said it had documented 514 social conflicts in 2007. The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) only approves certification for land that is free of property disputes. According to Asril Darussamin of the Indonesia Palm Oil Council, only two companies (PT Musim Mas and PT London Sumatra-Lonsum) are in the process of obtaining RSPO certification.

Bio-digester Installed under CDM program

[1](#)3. PT Bakri Sumatera Plantations is collaborating with AES AgriVerde Indonesia on a Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project

to decrease methane gas emissions from three palm oil plants. They are installing a bio-digester to capture and eliminate methane gas emitted from the plants. AES AgriVerde is responsible for the financing, monitoring, and operation of the project, including arranging permits and registering it with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat.

Sumitomo Forestry Plants Trees for CDM Project

14. Sumitomo Forestry Co. Ltd is cooperating with the Ministry of Forestry to plant 1,160 hectares of trees in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park as part of a Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project. Sumitomo has invested 12 billion rupiah (around \$1 million) and involved local people to do the planting and maintain the forest.

Jambi Province to Develop Carbon Credits

15. On November 12, the Governor of Jambi Province signed an MOU with IBN Group and an Australian NGO to develop and market carbon credits from his province. According to governor Zulkifli, the developers will buy credits from Jambi at \$10-20 dollar per ton of carbon. He estimates that carbon credits from Jambi could be worth up to 200 billion rupiah (\$18 million) per year.

West Kalimantan Develops Peat Forest Carbon Trade

16. According to Frank Momberg, Director of Program Development, Fauna and Flora International (FFI) Asia, FFI is helping the West Kalimantan government and Australia's Macquarie Group to develop two pilot projects for trading carbon credits from peat forests. The

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two forest areas are Putri River Peat Forest (57,000 hectares) in Ketapang Regency and Nung Peat Forest (130,000 hectares) in Kapuas Hulu Regency.

US Anthropologist Finds Long-Lost Primate

17. In November, a team led by Texas A&M University anthropologist Sharon Gursky-Doyen announced that it had discovered a group of nocturnal primates not seen alive in 85 years in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. Gursky-Doyen, working with one of her graduate students, Nanda Grow, and a team of locals trapped three pygmy tarsiers (*Tarsius pumilus*) creatures on Mt. Rore Katimbo in Lore Lindu National Park in late August. The pygmy tarsiers, furry creatures about 10 cm long and weighing less than 2 ounces, have not been observed since they were last collected for a museum in 1921. Scientists believed they were extinct until two Indonesian scientists trapping rats in the highlands of Sulawesi accidentally trapped and killed a pygmy tarsier in 2000.

Five New Fish Species Found in Bali

18. During 10 days of field research in the waters of Nusa Penida, Bali in late November, experts found five new fish species. They also found 60 percent of coral reefs in good condition. The Nusa Penida Marine Rapid Assessment Program, initiated by Conservation International Indonesia (CI), conducted the research in cooperation the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), State Ministry for Research and Technology, SEACORM, Yayasan Bahtera Nusantara, University of Udayana, and University of Warmadewa.

Endemic, Rare Frogs in Java Threatened

19. Ongoing deforestation, pollution, environmental degradation, and commercial trade in frogs are threatening some endemic frog populations in Java, according to frog expert Hellen Kurniati from Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI). The exportation of frogs is encouraging unsustainable exploitation of frog populations. Kurniati conveyed her concern during the commemoration of the 144th anniversary of Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense (MZB) on November 26 in Cibinong Science Center, Bogor, West Java.

110. There are 5,915 frog species in the world. According to Kurniati, there are 351 documented species in Indonesia, and as many

as 100 additional undocumented species of frogs in Papua. Found only in two national parks in West Java above 1,200-1,500 meters are the Java endemic red frog (*Leptophryne cruentata*) and the Ungaran Tree Frog (*Philautus jacobsoni*). Other threatened frogs are Kongkang Jeran (*Hyla masoni*), Kodok Pohon Mutiara (*Nyctixalus margaritifer*), Kodok Pohon Kaki Putik (*Philautus pallidipes*) and Kodok Pohon Jawa (*Rhacophorus javanus*). Although these frogs are under threat of extinction, the government has not listed them on the protected animal list. LIPI is working to increase public awareness in schools and universities of the importance of frog conservation.

Indonesia Hosts Alfred Russel Wallace Conference

¶11. On December 10-13, Indonesia hosted the Wallacea International Conference in Makassar, South Sulawesi. The conference celebrated the 150th anniversary of the letter sent from Wallacea by British biogeographer Alfred Russel Wallace. Some believe the letter defines the scientist as a co-discoverer of the Darwinian theory of natural selection. Over 230 participants from U.S., U.K, Netherlands, Australia, Italy, Spain, Thailand and Indonesia participated in the Conference. The conference aimed to provide a scientific history and highlight the Wallacea region as a global biodiversity hot spot, to stress the importance of conservation, and remind the global community of Wallace's forgotten role in developing the theory of evolution.

Surabaya River Pollution

¶12. The pollution in Surabaya River consists of 60 percent household waste and 40 percent industrial waste. 105 companies discharge waste into Surabaya River. While on patrol on December 8, the Water Patrol Team found a paper and a ceramic company dumping untreated industrial waste into the river. The offending companies blamed broken waste treatment equipment.

Corruption in Mangrove Procurement Uncovered

¶13. Tanjung Perak State Prosecutor's Office in Surabaya is

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investigating corruption in the procurement in 2004 of 280 thousand mangrove trees -- valued at Rp. 700 million (USD 64,400). The prosecutor's office suspects that the procurement involved fake documents and an unfair tender process. Five companies that failed to get the contract received tens of millions of rupiah in compensation from the tender winner. In addition, the type of mangrove trees provided did not meet the required specifications and only one out of a required nine hectares was planted as stated in the contract. So far, the prosecutor's office has questioned 24 witnesses and the investigation is continuing.

Largest Swath of Treeless Land in Malang Regency

¶14. There are 80 thousand hectares of at-risk and denuded land, the largest single such area in Java, in Malang Regency roughly 80 kilometers from Surabaya. The Malang government has announced plans to plant 1 million trees on 1,200 hectares -- part of its commitment to reforest additional "critical" land in the Regency.

Mangrove Tourism in Surabaya

¶15. The Surabaya City Government is planning to develop a 1,600-hectare Mangrove Forest Tourist Area, including a Mangrove Laboratory, in Pamurbaya. The City government has approved a budget for a detailed engineering design and Surabaya's Vice Mayor has issued a circular prohibiting the use of Pamurbaya as a residential area. Pamurbaya has 580 mangrove trees and 140 bird species.

HEALTH:

HIV Micro Chipping in Papua

¶16. In late November, a legislator in Indonesia's Papua Province, John Manangsang, revived a controversial proposal to require the government to implant microchips in people with HIV/AIDS. The issue

quickly received global media attention. Public health officials and human rights groups condemned the proposal. The National and Provincial AIDS Commissions and Papua's Governor, Barnabas Suebu, opposed the measure as an affront to human rights while doing nothing to halt the spread of the disease. The issue highlights the misunderstanding, lack of education and stigma of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the province and in the country. Last week other legislators defeated the measure and it did not pass into law.

East Java HIV/AIDS Prevention Activities

¶17. In September 2008, the East Java Health Department reported 3,188 people infected with HIV, 1,910 living with AIDS, and 580 recent deaths. The Department estimates an increase to 20,810 HIV/AIDS cases by 2010. Surabaya has the greatest number of HIV/AIDS cases in the province with 1,605 people infected with HIV and 1,163 people with AIDS over the last five years. The Surabaya City Government cooperates with 16 institutions to provide advocacy and counseling, and implements limited HIV/AIDS education programs. Surabaya's Health Department provides 10 VCT (Voluntary Counseling and Testing) centers to encourage high-risk people to test for HIV/AIDS. Surabaya will allocate Rp. 2 billion (USD 184,000) in the 2009 budget (an increase from Rp. 500 million this year) to help provide food supplements and vitamins for HIV/AIDS patients.

¶18. Based on June 2008 Statistical Data, 57 percent of Indonesians with HIV/AIDS are 15-30 years old. On World AIDS Day, December 1, the Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare reminded young people to take precautions in protecting themselves from HIV/AIDS.

Rabies Outbreak in Bali

¶19. Bali Governor Made Mangku Pastika has officially declared Bali "positive" for the presence of rabies following the death of four people. According to press reports, four people died from dog bites but it is still unclear whether they died of rabies. On November 29, Pastika ordered the Balinese people to conduct a mass culling of stray dogs to prevent a rabies outbreak. Pastika also urged dog owners to pay attention to the health of their pets and ordered port officials to strengthen custom checks to prevent the illegal entry of dogs. As of November 28, Yudhistira Swarga Foundation for Wild Dog Welfare has put down as many as 17 wild and domesticated dogs using lethal injection, and the Badung Health Department vaccinated 76 residents bitten by dogs. On December 16, Bali's provincial government reported that the administration had put down 281 dogs and vaccinated 683 others.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:

BPPT Develops WiSE-8 Aircraft Prototype

¶20. The Agency of Assessment and Application of Technology (BPPT) has developed and successfully tested a prototype of WiSE-8 aircraft (Wing in Surface Effect). The aircraft flies 1-3 meters above the sea surface with speed of 80 knots or 144 km per hour. A marine resort in the Thousand Islands near Jakarta will be the first company to operate the aircraft.

GOI Allocates \$109 Million for Research

¶21. Director General for Higher Education Fasli Jalal of the Ministry of National Education announced that the government has allocated 20 percent of the State Budget, or 1.2 trillion rupiah (\$109 million), for educational research activities in 2009. Fasli said that this would further the government's national research agenda by improving the quality of research. State Minister for Research and Technology Kusmayanto Kadiman added that departmental and non-departmental research centers were preparing proposals, and will focus on food, energy, transportation, information technology, defense technology and health.

Only 419 Patents in 23 Years

¶22. In the past 22 years, universities in Indonesia only produced

419 research patents (compare with Japan, with 370,000 patents per year). Most scientists only produced books, journals, or reports, and most the research activities did not involve a new invention/innovation. Only five universities are actively seeking a patent: Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), Gajah Mada University, Sepuluh Nopember Institute of Technology and Brawijaya University.

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